

Message Text

SECRET

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65

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 FMC-01

INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06 OES-06 SSO-00

PM-04 H-02 L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 EAE-00 ACDA-07 /078 W

----- 117077

O R 211121Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9605

AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SEOUL 7570

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, JA, US, KS

SUBJECT: ROK BOARDING OF JAPANESE FISHING BOAT

REF: COMUSKOREA 202115Z AND PREVIOUS

1. FOLLOWING IS SUMMARY OF PRINCIPAL FACTS KNOWN TO DATE
INVOLVED IN BOARDING OF JAPANESE FISHING BOAT SEIJIN MARU
BY ROK NAVY SEPTEMBER 20.

2. EARLY SEPTEMBER 20, ROKG RELAYED TO US REPORT CONTAINED
COMUSKOREA 192155Z REGARDING SURRENDER OF AGENT ON KOMUNDO
ISLAND (OFF SOUTH CENTRAL COAST OF ROK) AND AGENT'S REPORT
THAT TWO INFILTRATOR'S BOATS WITH APPROXIMATELY 50 PERSONNEL
WERE SOME WHERE SOUTH OF CHEJU DO.

3. ROK AIR FORCE AND ANVY INITIATED EXTENSIVE SEARCH FOR
VESSEL IN AREAS SOUTH AND WEST OF ROK, BEGINNING ABOUT
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5:45 A.M. LOCAL TIME. NUMEROUS VESSELS IN AREA BUT NONE

APPEARS TO HAVE ANSWERED DESCRIPTION PROVIDED. AT ABOUT 1130 HOURS LOCAL, KOREAN POLICE REPORTEDLY SIGHTED VESSEL ANSWERING GENERAL BUT IMPRECISE DESCRIPTION GIVEN BY AGENT, AT LOCATION 34-10N/126-10E (SOUTH OF MOKPO ABOUT 4 MILES FROM ISLAND OF NAPTAEGI-DO) REPORTEDLY POLICE CRAFT FIRED SHOTS FROM 20 MM GUN AND SMALL ARMS ACROSS THE BOW. VESSEL STOPPED AND WAS IDENTIFIED AS JAPANESE FISHING BOAT CHONG JIN HWAN (KOREAN PRONUNCIATION OF SEI JIN MARU) WITH HULL NUMBER YG 25613.

4. AT 1920 HOURS LOCAL, ROK AIR FORCE REPORTED VESSEL OF SIMILAR DESCRIPTION AT 34-38N/125-44E (ABOUT 5 MILES FROM UIDO ISLAND), DROPPED FLARES AND OBSERVED HULL NUMBER YG 25613 (SAME AS VESSEL CITED ABOVE) BUT WITH NAME READ BY AIRCRAFT PERSONNEL AS HORYONG. ROKN DD 97 ORDERED TO CLOSE FOR INSPECTION. (WE UNDERSTAND CHARACTERS FOR CHONG JIN AND THOSE FOR HO - RYONG ARE NOT RPT NOT SIMILAR.)

5. AT ABOUT 2000 HOURS LOCAL, DD 97 APPROACHED SAME VESSEL IN VICINITY 34-53N/125-32E, ABOUT 10 MILES FROM ROK ISLAND OF TAEDUN-DO IN TAEHUKSAN GROUP. C.O. DESTROYER COMMANDER REPORTED TO HIS SECTOR HEADQUARTERS HIS INTENTION TO BOARD. SUBSEQUENTLY DD 97 REPORTED BOARDING AND SEARCHING VESSEL BETWEEN 2019 HOURS AND 2150 HOURS. VESSEL'S IDENTITY WAS DETERMINED TO BE JAPANESE FISHING BOAT CHONG JIN HWAN (SEI JIN MARU) AND IT WAS RELEASED. EMBASSY HAS NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO DETERMINE BY WHOM, HOW, AND WHEN AUTHORIZATION TO BOARD WAS MADE. THESE QUESTIONS ARE BEING INVESTIGATED.

6. ROK MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OFFICIAL (YI TONG-IK, JAPAN DIVISION CHIEF) REPORTED SEP. 21 HE HAD ATTEMPTED DURING EVENING AT MND REQUEST TO CONFIRM THAT VESSEL WAS JAPANESE FISHING BOAT AND HAD FINALLY DONE SO THROUGH ROK EMBASSY TOKYO. HE ARGUED THERE IS PRECEDENT FOR BOARDING BOATS IN KOREAN EXCLUSIVE FISHING ZONE TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE IN FACT FISHING. HE DID NOT RESPOND WHEN ASKED IF ROK-JAPAN AGREEMENT SPECIFICALLY PROVIDES FOR SUCH BOARDING.

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7. JAPANESE EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR MABUCHI INFORMS US THAT JAPANESE DEFENSE ATTACHE WAS FIRST TOLD OF ROK INTEREST IN JAPANESE BOAT AT 1500 HOURS SEPTEMBER 20; EXACT CIRCUMSTANCES AND REASONS FOR THIS ADVICE TO JAPANESE NOT CLEAR. JAPANESE DEFENSE ATTACHE THEN TOLD BY ROK MND AFTER EVENT ON SEPTEMBER 21 THAT ROK NAVAL PERSONNEL HAD GONE ON BOARD JAPANESE FISHING BOAT WITH JAPANESE FISHERMEN'S PERMISSION. ROK MND HAS INFORMED JAPANESE HERE THAT THEY

ARE SORRY TROUBLE CAUSED JAPANESE FISHERMEN, AND THAT THEY NOW
CONSIDER CASE CLOSED. JAPANESE POLCOUNS WHO HAD RECEIVED NO
WORD ON CASE FROM TOKYO AS OF COB SEPTEMBER 21 HAS
REPORTED EVENTS TO HIS FOREIGN MINISTRY AS DESCRIBED ABOVE BY
ROKS. HE SAYS HE ANTICIPATES NO PROBLEMS WILL DEVELOP OVER
THIS INCIDENT.

8. INVESTIGATION OF FACTS CONTINUING.
STERN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Disposition History: n/a
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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04 MAY 2006

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